

Freeway advisory team takes up West Valley impact issues

By Doug Murphy
Staff Writer

The South Mountain Loop 202 Citizens Advisory Team meets Thursday to discuss the freeway's impact on West Valley residents.

The meeting will start at 5:30 p.m. at the Kumatke Center in the Learning Center Meeting Hall on the northwest corner of 51st Avenue and St. Johns Road.

On the agenda are reports discussing the economic impact of the freeway and special efforts to preserve environment, public parks, recreation lands, wildlife and historic sites.

The advisory team was formed to help the Arizona Department of Transportation update the freeway route. In 1988 the freeway was planned to go from

Interstate 10 at Pecos Road, west through South Mountain Park and then north to reconnect with I-10 around 55th Avenue.

The advisory team is under pressure to recommend a west-side route for the proposed freeway so developers and city officials will know where the freeway could go.

Currently there are three possible west-side routes that lie between 55th Avenue and the Loop 101 interchange. Depending on which route is selected, between 120 and 780 homes or home sites would have to be bought by the state.

On the east side there is only one designated route – Pecos Road. If no other route is found, construction would mean the removal of between 255 and 659 homes depending on if the freeway were built at

or below ground level to help muffle the noise.

Some advisory team members, including Laurel Arndt of Ahwatukee Foothills, have suggested that the 1988 plan is out of date and that the freeway should go farther south and farther west to take into account rapid growth in Maricopa and other Pinal County towns and the rapid growth expected in the West Valley.

For information visit the ADOT Web site at www.southmountainfreeway.com. Supporters for the freeway have their own site at www.complete202.org and opponents rally at www.protektazchildren.org.

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